

Thunderbolt

Vol. 2, No. 17

Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.
Growing Warriors and Leaders for Our Air and Space Force

May 3, 2002

Luke removed from Superfund list

By Airman 1st Class Kara Philp
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality announced at a ceremony Monday that Luke Air Force Base has been removed from the national listing of federal Superfund sites.

Luke, which covers more than 4,000 acres, is the first active Air Force installation to be delisted from the Superfund list.

Arizona Governor Jane Hull; Maureen Koetz, deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for environment, safety and occupational health; and Wayne Nastri, Pacific

Southwest office EPA regional administrator, joined Col. Dennis Rea, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, on stage during the ceremony. Mr. Nastri presented Luke Air Force Base and the State of Arizona with plaques officially recognizing Luke's removal from the Superfund list and Governor Hull went on to present Luke with a "Spirit of Arizona" trophy, also recognizing the base's efforts.

"This achievement by Team Luke is another shining example of the Air Force's environmental commit-

ment," said Brig. Gen. Steve Sargeant, 56th Fighter Wing commander. "When it comes to protecting the environment, there is only one way to do it and that's the right way."

The Superfund list, also known as the National Priorities List, is the federal government's program to clean the nation's uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.

Luke was named a Superfund site in August 1990. Discharges and waste disposal from aircraft maintenance and light industrial operations resulted in soil and groundwater contamination of petroleum residues, cleaning solvents and volatile organic compounds.

"The Air Force took responsibility for their

World War II-era contamination and cleaned it up," Mr. Nastri said. "Luke Air Force Base serves as a model on how federal and state agencies can work together toward successful cleanups."

In September 1990, the EPA, the ADEQ, the Arizona Department of Water Resources and the Air Force signed an agreement establishing the framework required for site investigations and cleanup at Luke.

"This achievement by Team Luke is another shining example of the Air Force's environmental commitment."

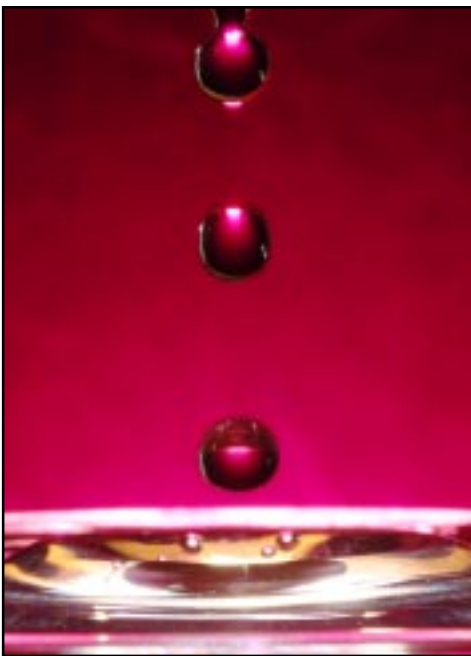
Brig. Gen. Steve Sargeant
56th Fighter Wing commander



Master Sgt. Michael Burns
Arizona Governor Jane Hull honors the flag while the Luke honor guard posts colors at a ceremony announcing Luke's removal from the national listing of federal Superfund sites Monday.

Hot shot

Thunderbolt receives Air Force award



Staff Sgt. Aaron Marcus

Staff Sgt. Aaron Marcus, 56th Communications Squadron photographer, won an Air Force-level competition award in the digital photography for creative effects category for his photograph "Drops."

By Staff Sgt. Corey Drury
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

A 56th Communications Squadron photographer recently won an award under the digital photography for creative effects category at an Air Force-level competition.

Staff Sgt. Aaron Marcus was among 260 adult and youth participants vying for awards in 27 categories. The competition included active duty, civilian and family members.

Sergeant Marcus' photograph, "Drops," is of water drops over a wine glass.

"I enjoy the challenge of trying to capture the moment with different types of experimentation and being able to see the final product produced," Sergeant Marcus said.

Sergeant Marcus, who says he is humble about winning, started his photography training in high school, and has been a military photographer for three years.

"Photography is the best job I have ever have had," Sergeant Marcus said. "This job allows me to be more creative and truly have my own style of taking pictures."

"Sergeant Marcus has received recognition at the Air Force level for his craftsmanship and artistry, traits he brings to work every day for the 56th Communications Squadron," said Lt. Col. Frank Knickerbocker, 56th CS commander. "We're very proud of Aaron and the entire team of audiovisual professionals in our mission support flight."

Sergeant Marcus says he enjoys photography and the people he works with.

"It's a great feeling to know my supervisors and coworkers are behind me all the way," Sergeant Marcus said. "It's my supervisors who allow me the freedom and flexibility to experiment and excel at my job with a style of my own."

The photography competition is open to everyone on base.

"I want to let people know this competition is open to all people at Luke," Sergeant Marcus said. "I encourage everyone who likes to take pictures to get involved in the contest."

For more information about the photo contest and how to enter, contact Sallianne Parvu, director for the skills development center, at (623) 856-6502.

Six Thunderbolts win best in AETC awards

By Airman 1st Class Susan McQueary
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Six Thunderbolts recently won "best" in AETC services awards.

John Beckett, 56th Services Squadron Business Operations Flight chief, won the senior civilian manager award; Steve Wallace, 56th SVS golf course director, won the civilian manager award; Senior Master Sgt. Larry Keen Jr., 56th SVS superintendent, won the senior NCO award; Tech. Sgt. Michael Hurley, 56th SVS fitness center NCO in charge, won the NCO award; Septus Wallace, 56th SVS work leader, won the civilian specialist award; and Staff Sgt. Tanya Mooney, 56th SVS lodging clerk, won the enlisted Individual Mobilization Augmentee award.

"As a career services officer and the support group commander, I know what it takes to succeed in the services demanding customer service business," said Col. Bob Worley, 56th Support Group commander. "These people are absolutely some of the best I have ever worked with in 26 years. I am proud

of them individually and what they have accomplished for Luke and our Thunderbolts."

Mr. Beckett executed emergency action plans after Sept. 11 and responded to a drop in business due to heighten security measures and saved \$60,000 while meeting the needs of Luke. He also launched the AETC winter games

— a two-day command wide golf and crud tournament.

"This award is a team award," Mr. Beckett said. "I am fortunate to have been selected to represent excellent service and products to the Luke community. The team is the people who work every day to make our flight a success."

Additionally, Mr. Beckett was a key member in the Pizza Hut and

Subway construction project. His research and business analysis was key in the planning process.

"John Beckett is absolutely the best business flight chief I have ever worked with," Colonel Worley said. "His creativity and focus on people, both customers and employees, is amazing."

Mr. Steve Wallace designed and implemented a training program and got four staff members in the

"These people are absolutely some of the best I have ever worked with in 26 years. I am proud of them individually and what they have accomplished for Luke and our Thunderbolts."

Col. Bob Worley
56th Support Group commander

See AETC awards, Page 9

Action Line



Brig. Gen. Steve Sargeant
56th FW commander

The 56th Fighter Wing Commander's Action Line is your direct line to me. I get personally involved in every reply. Your ideas and concerns help build a stronger foundation on which we can successfully complete our mission and take care of our people.

Before you call the Action Line, please give Luke's professionals a chance to answer your question in concert with your unit chain of command. If the appropriate expert is unable to provide a satisfactory response, call me at (623) 856-7011 or send an e-mail to command.actionline@luke.af.mil. Please include your name and telephone number so I can provide a personal reply to your concern. Together we can make Luke Air Force Base a better place to live and work.

Who to call:

Fraud, waste and abuse hotline	856-6149
Civil engineer customer service	856-7231
Patient advocate	856-9100
Legal assistance	856-6901
Law enforcement desk	856-5970
Housing Office	856-7643
Military pay	856-7028

E-mail, command.actionline@luke.af.mil
or call, (623) 856-7011.

For family matters, visit www.luke.af.mil/lukefam or call, (623) 856-4243

Save a Life. Give blood.

See your local Red Cross for details.

Sortie Scoreboard

Fiscal year 2002 programmed flight training

	To date	To date goal	FY02 Goal
Sorties flown	21,760	16,407	39,376
Flying hours	29,569	21,536	51,687
Pilot graduate	515	415	995
MRA graduates	515	389	934

Luke people deployed:
AEF 1/2: 73 AEF 9/10: 2
ONE: 1 OEF: 187
Total: 263



Commentary

Commander dispels myths

Leadership key to Luke's training mission success

By Col. Art Cameron

56th Logistics Group commander

Leadership is paramount in our daily tasks of ensuring safe and reliable aircraft are available in support of Luke's training mission. Although we are not on the frontlines of our war on terrorism, your contributions to our countries national defense is just as important. I would like to dispel a pair of common myths people associate with leadership as well as offer some of my insight on what you, as a military member, can do to become a better leader.

Myth 1: Only those in charge are leaders.

While we do have great leaders among our ranks, there are members of our force whose leadership is not as visible. Where do we find these leaders and what makes them a leader? The fact is, leaders can be found at every level within an organization. Often, the leadership qualities of an individual are mistakenly contributed to rank or position. While rank and position may identify the scope of ones responsibilities, it does not imply leadership abilities or potential. Leadership, then, can be observed everywhere from executive level officers to shop floors. The point is, if you want to be a leader, opportunity exists — you just have to develop your leadership skills. There are a multitude of examples to learn from, some good and some bad. Nevertheless, you can learn from both.

Myth 2: Leaders are born leaders.

I have interacted with many leaders during my Air Force Career, and although a few gleamed with natural ability, I can assure you many did not join the Air Force with the skills they have today. Rather, through training and practice, these individuals have groomed their leadership skills to be more effective. If the natural charisma you need to capture the hearts, minds and souls of others could use some help, don't be discouraged. You may have the dedication and endless energy, and a strong vision of where you want to be, but it will be difficult to get there without the right tools.

The right tools: There is a common consensus among those that study leadership that there are four specific traits shared among leaders who inspire others. Furthermore, these traits must complement

each other. That is, without exhibiting all four traits, one cannot be truly inspirational.

First, genuine leaders selectively show their weaknesses. No one wants a perfect leader. When leaders expose weaknesses, they show us who they really are. Consider, for example, a leader in your work center. Is he or she grumpy on Mondays, disorganized, or possibly a little clumsy? Revealing such weaknesses establishes trust and helps get others to follow. For if a leader appeared to be perfect at everything, they wouldn't need followers since they are signaling they can do it all themselves. Instead a leader must communicate that "I am just like you" — imperfect.

Leaders must also trust subordinates with tough empathy. Although an often-overused cliché, practicing tough empathy is truly important. This means giving people what they need, not necessarily what they want. In other words, balance respect for individuals and the task at hand. Therefore, look after your people, but don't forget about the customer they are serving. It is easy to get caught up in ensuring those in your work center are happy, but it is sometimes necessary to care with some detachment in order to stay focused on the mission.

Third, inspirational leaders dare to be different. Much like exposing weaknesses, leaders capitalize on what is unique about them. These differences could include a strong sense of loyalty, intellect, expertise, or even overall appearance—anything to set you apart. One danger, however, is that over-differentiating may make you appear self-centered or arrogant to others.

Finally, leaders rely on intuition throughout their daily activities. Skilled leaders time their actions and how they apply the above three traits based on the situation at hand. Ill-timed comments or jokes, for example, can make you appear insensitive or unfocused. This trait certainly requires the most effort to refine. Most leaders operate with less than sufficient information, thus they must be able to read "body language" or pick up on subtle facts when making decisions. It takes practice, but by making a conscious effort to observe your surroundings you will be more able to accurately assessing a situation.

In conclusion, leadership is what you make of it. If you want to be a leader, you can succeed by simply observing your environment and developing the right skills. Be yourself, selectively expose weaknesses, practice tough empathy, and learn to assess your situation and you will succeed.

'Old school' alive and well

By Maj. Andy Coggins

355th Comptroller Squadron commander

DAVIS MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. — Did you ever run into one of those senior NCOs or officers who came from the "Old School"? You know the type — they have a passion for perfection, always seem to find solutions to your toughest problems, take care of their troops and can always be counted on to get the job done.

Some people say that old-schoolers are a dying breed since they're a different generation or were trained back when basic training was really tough.

I would argue the Old School is still churning out a record number of graduates every day. Let's take a look at some of characteristics of an Old School alumnus:

Open-minded. Sees problems from different perspectives.

Loyal. Displays loyalty up and down the chain of command.

Discipline. Enforces standards, sets expectations and takes action to ensure they are met.

Shares. Shares knowledge with others to build a stronger team and avoid re-inventing the wheel.

Communicates. Focuses on a goal by communicating the essential "who, what, when and where" to team members and keeps everyone in the loop.

Hands-on. Earns credibility and the respect of subordinates by getting his hands dirty and demonstrating technical proficiency.

Observant. Keeps a close eye on, and an open ear in, the workplace and has a keen sense for spotting problems early.

Organized. Tracks suspenses,

submits performance reports early and follows issues until they are completed.

Leader. They are who the people turn to for guidance.

It's far too easy to fall into an intellectual rut if you don't expose yourself to fresh ideas and new experiences.

Just as important, when was the last time you spent time with your co-workers to learn the issues they are handling? You may learn more about what's really going on in your unit if you spend more time listening to your Airmen.

I say Old School is alive and well. Take a look at all of the people around you, and you might be amazed at how many old-schoolers there are.

If you aren't a graduate of the Old School, maybe it's time for you to enroll!

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What's that ...



Airman 1st Class Kara Philp Taylor Aastrom, 10, son of Capt. Michelle Aastrom, 56th Fighter Wing executive officer, and Brenda Jones, 13, stepdaughter of Master Sgt. John Schmeltz, 56th FW resource advisor, are shown around base by their parents during "Bring your child to work day" April 25. Local schools and Thunderbolts participated in the program as a way to broaden student understanding of different career options and responsibilities to help children decide on a career.

SFS to participate in memorial

The 56th Security Forces Squadron will participate in a memorial retreat honoring the Mayaguez Rescue Operation May 9 at the base flagpole at 4:30 p.m.

The 56th Special Operations Wing, now the 56th Fighter Wing, was activated March 16, 1967 and deployed to Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, April 8, 1967.

The wing's participation in the Mayaguez rescue operation culminated eight years of distinguished southeast Asia combat service. The Mayaguez operation resulted in the most decorations of any single mission in Air Force history earning four Air Force crosses, 22 silver stars, and numerous air medals, bronze stars, and purple hearts.

In 1975 the 56th Special Operations Wing stationed at southeast Asia, was recoiling from the fall of South Vietnam, and found itself destined for a historical encounter with Cambodian Khmer Rouge communist forces, said Chief Master Sgt. Charles Coles, 56th SFS security forces manager.

"Very few members of Team Luke were on active duty when the Mayaguez incident occurred; in fact, our youngest airmen were not yet born," Chief Coles said. "Twenty-seven years ago I recall reading newspaper stories as I prepared to begin my Air Force career."

Among the news the chief remembers:

- ♦ In April 1975, the last U.S. military forces left South Vietnam in what President Gerald Ford termed

"a humiliating withdrawal." North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong forces began taking control of the country. The U.S. military involvement in southeast Asia had ended.

- ♦ The American registered container ship, the S.S. Mayaguez developed problems and began drifting in the Gulf of Thailand, off the coast of Cambodia May 12, 1975. While still in international waters, Khmer Communist forces of Cambodia seized the ship and her crew. The Mayaguez was moved to Koh Tang Island and the crew was taken ashore and imprisoned.
- ♦ The following day, diplomatic efforts failed to secure the release of the Mayaguez and President Ford directed Lt. Gen. John J. Burns, 7th Air Force commander, to assemble a contingency rescue force. General Burns alerted the 56th Special Operations Wing to assemble a rescue force using 21st Special Operations Squadron helicopters and 50 combat ready 56th SFS security police-

"...(The Mayaguez incident) stands apart as a hallowed and significant event in 56th Fighter Wing history. Those involved in the rescue deserve lasting recognition."

Chief Master Sgt. Charles Coles
56th Security Forces Squadron
security forces manager

men who were specially trained for evacuating U.S. Embassies in southeast Asia.

- ♦ Shortly after midnight on May 14, 1975 a long string of CH-53C "Knife" and HH-53C "Jolly Green" helicopters lifted off from NKP carrying security police to the operation staging area at U-Tapao Royal Thai Air Base where they were to link-up with another 75-man security police force. About 37 miles west of NKP,

See Mayaguez, Page 6

Thunderbolt Instructor Pilot of the Week

Name: Capt. Jeremy "Kid" Sloane, 62nd Fighter Squadron
Duty title: B Flight commander
Hometown: Federal Way, Wash.
Family: Wife, Lisa; twin boys, Mitchell and Quinn
Education: Bachelor's degree in general engineering from U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
Time in service: 10 years
Previous assignments: Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif.; Columbus AFB, Miss.; Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany
Greatest feats: Combat search and rescue for the downed F-117 pilot during Allied Force and my wife and two boys.
Goals: Teach more with fewer words.
Hobbies: Sports
Inspirations: My dad
Self-description: Always gives the old college try.
Famous last words: "No man can eat 50 eggs."
Commander's comments: "Kid is the cornerstone of a group of highly experienced flight commanders in the Spikes," said Lt. Col. Tom Schmidt, 62nd Fighter Squadron commander. "He significantly impacts the success of the 62nd Fighter Squadron."



Sloane

News Briefs

Heritage night

The Cultural Awareness Committee is sponsoring an ethnic buffet and show featuring Polynesian hula dancers today at 7 p.m. at the Desert Star Enlisted Club. The cost is \$15 per person. For more information, call Damita Klaiber at (623) 856-7834, Master Sgt. James Sanders at (623) 856-5800 or Tech. Sgt. Leroy Lefti at (623) 856-6300.

Enlisted dining-in

Tickets for this year's enlisted dining-in are on sale now through June 10 and are available for purchase through first sergeants. The dining-in is June 14 at 6 p.m. at the Desert Star Enlisted Club.

Annual leave donations

- ♦ Donald Curtis, 56th Supply Squadron, needs annual civilian leave donations due to an undisclosed medical emergency.
- ♦ Randall Hoff, 56th Medical Group, needs annual civilian leave donations due to cervical spine surgery and the associated recovery.
- ♦ John Dennis, Family Support Center, needs annual civilian leave donations due to an undisclosed medical emergency.

To donate leave, call (623) 856-7762 or go to Bldg. 1150, room 1172. Completed applications may be faxed to (623) 856-3968.

Body fat taping hours

Body fat taping at the health and wellness center is Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 to 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Protocol position

The 56th Fighter Wing is looking for a technical or staff sergeant or senior airman interested in filling a one-year special duty assignment in wing protocol, beginning in June. For more information, please call the 56th Fighter Wing protocol (623) 856-5604 or 5605.

Housing seminar

The 56th Civil Engineer Squadron is conducting a home buying and resale seminar May 22 from 11:30 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. at Bldg. 1150, housing conference room. For more information and reservations, call (623) 856-3008.

AFSA meeting

The Air Force Sergeants Association Cactus Eagle Chapter 1260 meets Wednesday at 11 a.m. at the Desert Star Enlisted Club Top-3 Lounge. The Auxiliary meeting is Wednesday at 7 p.m. For more information, call (623) 856-6223.

NCO development course

NCO professional development course has resumed. Courses are May 28 through 30, June 25 through 27, Aug. 27 through 29 and Sept. 24 through 26 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Courses will be held in Bldg. 156. For more information, call Master Sgt. Christopher Reams at (623) 856-2985.

Clothing drive

The 56th Security Forces Squadron is hosting a "Clean out your closet" clothing drive supporting St. Vincent DePaul volunteer center starting Monday through May 17. Deliver donations to the Heritage Room in the Bldg. 179.

Job fair

The Luke job fair is Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Desert Star Enlisted Club. Approximately 100 employers will be in attendance. The job fair is open to military ID holders, their families and those who have separated within the last year. Participants are advised to bring at least 20 copies of their resume. For more information, call (623) 856-6781.

Police Week

The 56th Security Forces Squadron is celebrating Police Week May 13 through 17. Combat Arms is holding a handgun and rifle Excellence In Competition match in support of Police Week. The handgun competition is May 16; rifle is May 17. For more information, call (623) 856-6464.

Pilot nominated for Air Combat award

Thunderbolt recognized for professionalism, proficiency

By Airman 1st Class Kara Philp
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

A member of the 308th Fighter Squadron was recently nominated to compete at the Air Combat Command level for the 2001 Anthony C. Shine Award. Capt. Lansing "Shudda" Pilch, 308th FS weapons and tactics chief, will compete against other combat Air Force fighter pilots for the award. Mrs. Shine established the award in honor of her husband who was killed in action while flying a combat mission in Southeast Asia. The award recognizes an outstanding fighter pilot for proficiency and professionalism in flying a fighter aircraft as well as the pilots' participation in the local community. The award is presented to a fighter pilot in the grade major or below. "Captain Pilch is an outstanding ambassador for the 56th Fighter Wing," said Lt. Col. John Sieverling, 308th FS commander. "'Shudda' is one of the most talented and selfless officers I have ever worked with. Simply put, he is Luke's best." Captain Pilch served as the mission commander for three large force employments, which included more than 100 aircraft. The missions resulted in an

entire Integrated Air Defense System destroyed with minimal losses. He has taught academics for both students and instructors on offensive, defensive and high aspect basic fighter maneuvers in addition to air combat maneuvering, air combat training, tactical intercepts, basic surface attack, surface attack tactics, and night vision goggles. Captain Pilch is also responsible for performing various emergency procedures evaluations including the instructor course and mission and instrument checkrides. "He often works extra hours to keep struggling students on track, providing very tailored instruction," Colonel Sieverling said. "If there is any question regarding weaponry or how to employ it, 'Shudda' has the answer." As a weapons and tactics officer, Captain Pilch advises academic and flight instruction for the 36 instructor pilots of the 308th FS. "Captain Pilch is simply the Emerald Knight's best F-16 instructor," Colonel Sieverling said. "Stu-

dent pilots constantly praise his flying skills and relaxing teaching style, and he is very active in the local community." Other areas Captain Pilch has assisted in include updating security procedures and the construction of a new vault to accommodate aircraft classification requirements. He is also responsible for heading up the top gun program, revising the boresight program and organizing the squadron's classified filing system. "I felt very honored to compete for the award and to represent the 308th Fighter Squadron and Luke Air Force Base," Captain Pilch said. "More than anything, it's a testament to how hard everyone in the 308th has worked in the past year. When the instructors in a squadron are hard-working and know their stuff, it makes their weapons officer look good. It is important to our squadron to get some recognition because we are just starting to really hit our stride; something like this can give us more motivation to continue the positive trend."

"Captain Pilch is an outstanding ambassador for the 56th Fighter Wing. 'Shudda' is one of the most talented and selfless officers I have ever worked with. Simply put, he is Luke's best."

Lt. Col. John Sieverling
308th Fighter Squadron commander

Volunteer awards

Ceremony honors Luke volunteers

By 2nd Lt. Kevin Tuttle
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The 56th Fighter Wing hosted the Annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and Second Annual Volunteer Fair April 25 at the Desert Star Enlisted Club. The volunteers were recognized in four areas: the youth category, the retired military category, the active duty category and the non-military category. All volunteers were individually honored by accepting a certificate from Col. Dennis Rea, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander. Maj. Alan Gladfelter, 56th Mission Support Squadron commander, praised the efforts of the volunteers. "This recognition we're doing is definitely the right thing to do," Major Gladfelter said. "We have a very committed group of people who give to the base, our Airmen and our families by working in places like our hospital, which is really important. They don't have to do it and it's nice to give them a pat on the back to show them we appreciate them." No matter how many hours or where

they had volunteered, every volunteer received the certificate as a "thank you" and to give each person public recognition for the work they do. "We have some people who volunteer off base at local hospitals or with the elderly and the work they do there is just as important as it is here," said Tawania Kovacs, 56th MSS Family Support Center family and work life consultant. "A lot of base agencies – the hospital, the tax people, the Red Cross – have a lot of volunteer hours. One place is as good as another to volunteer." In order to win one of the top four categories, volunteers donate about 600 hours of time. The winner of the youth category is Justine Cabulong; the retired military winner is Tech. Sgt. Lucinda Carmichael; the active duty winner is Master Sgt. John J. Gresko, 308th Fighter Squadron lead production superintendent; and the non-military winner is Ivy Isom. One other award is the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Award, given to the volunteer of the year. This year's winner was Sarah Johnson-Robles. "I think volunteering provides people



Johnson-Robles



Cabulong



Carmichael



Isom



Gresko

the opportunity to choose what they like to do," said Else Wingert, 56th MSS Family Support Center family support specialist. "There's definitely something about it; you get a certain amount of satisfaction for yourself in helping people and you get to see the joy on their faces and it certainly shows the values of the Air Force."

Wing Warrior

This column recognizes Team Luke members' contributions to wartime readiness in the tradition of 2nd Lt. Frank Luke.

Name: Tech. Sgt Robert Funicelli, 56th Supply Squadron
Duty Title: Senior mission capable controller
Hometown: Dean, Pa.
Years in service: 17 years
Pervious assignments: McGuire Air Force Base, N.J.; Comiso Air Base, Sicily, Italy; Bitburg AB, Germany; Shaw AFB, N.C.; Keflavic AB, Iceland
Family: Wife, Leslie, married 4 ½ years; daughter Kathleen, 3
Bad habits: Having high expectations of others.
Commander's Comments: "Nothing less than exceptional results have come from Sergeant Funicelli," said Maj. Peter Hofelich, 56th Supply Squadron commander. "Our customer backorders are at the lowest level in six years and for the last 10 months straight, we have outpaced the AF F-16 fleet non-mission capable supply rate. He is relentless and untiring when it comes to getting aircraft parts for the largest fighter wing in the Air Force. He makes things happen — a true professional and warrior."



Funicelli

Luke's Spirit

Brig. Gen. Steve Sargeant, 56th Fighter Wing commander, uses this column to recognize Team Luke members' outstanding customer service.

Name: Staff Sgt. Manuel Zubia, 56th Mission Support Squadron
Duty Title: Personnel journeyman
Hometown: Post, Texas
Time in service: Five years
Family: Wife, Cecilia; daughter, Zoe; stepdaughters, Myra and Alex
Inspiration: My daughter, Zoe
Goals: Be successful in all I do
Self-description: Hard worker, respectful and motivated
Greatest feat: Fatherhood
Hobbies: Classic hot rods and sports
Famous last words: "You're killing me."
Commander's comments: Staff Sgt. Zubia's positive attitude and eagerness to provide assistance are noticeable as soon as you walk into the orderly room," General Sargeant said. "He always has a personal commitment to quality performance and gets the job done right the first time."



Zubia

FULL

Salutes

The following individuals are second quarter award winners:

56th Operations Group

Weapons Apprentice: Senior Airman Jason Welch, 308th Fighter Squadron

Weapons Craftsman: Staff Sgt. Sean Scoggins, 61st FS

Weapons Supervisor: Tech. Sgt. Omar Barkley, 21st FS

309th FS Weapons Load Crew: Staff Sgt. Dennis Brown, Airman 1st Class Isaiah Hill and Airman 1st Class Harry McElroy

21st FS Weapons Load Crew: Staff Sgt. Robert Petty, Staff Sgt. James Tankersley, and Staff Sgt. Gabriel Flagg

56th Wing Safety Office

Unit Ground Safety Representative Award: Tech. Sgt. David Grimes, 56th Transportation Squadron

Wing Weapons Safety Award: Tech. Sgt. Raymond Edmonds, 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron

Wing Flight Safety Maintenance Award: Master Sgt. Samuel Jones, 56th Operations Support Squadron

Wing Flight Safety Officer Award: Capt. Glen Richards, 309th FS

Flight Safety Award: Capt. Kevin Kennelly, 62nd FS

The following are recipients of 56th Fighter Wing Safety Office Well-done awards:

Senior Airman Colleen Wilson, 56th OSS; Staff Sgt. Lourn Evans, Jr., 309th FS; Staff Sgt. Andre Williams, 56th Component Repair Squadron; Master Sgt. Richard Willaims, 310th FS; and Capt. Joseph Speed, 310th FS



Retirement

A retirement ceremony for Master Sgt. Jeffery Dixon, 56th Fighter Wing law office superintendent, will be held June 21 at 11:50 a.m. in the public affairs auditorium, Bldg. 1150.

Mayaguez

Continued from Page 3

a CH-53C “Knife” staggered out of formation with mechanical problems. The “Knife”, carrying a crew of four, a linguist, and 18 security policemen, plummeted into a thickly wooded area and exploded. A trailing CH-53C “Jolly Green” landed and dismounted its security police force to assist. The intense heat of burning fuel, exploding ammunition and grenades kept the rescuers at bay — there were no survivors.

Learning of the tragedy, General Burns held the security police force at U-Tapao until the Marine forces could deploy from Okinawa.

♦ Early in the morning of May 15th an assault force of 175 Marines, carried by 21st Special Operations Squadron helicopters, assault Khmer Rouge forces on Koh Tang Island. Expecting only light resistance, the Marines encountered a heavily armed force of 200 laying in ambush after a story in the Bangkok Post, an English print newspaper, alerted Khmer Rouge of the impending assault. Intense ground fire and grenade attacks ensued throughout the rescue effort; in the end, Marine forces secured the re-

lease of all 39 Mayaguez crewmen and the ship.

“The Mayaguez incident is no more than a footnote in most histories of the period; however, it stands apart as a hallowed and significant event in 56th Fighter Wing history,” Chief Coles said. “Those involved in the rescue deserve lasting recognition. Their decisive actions at a time when U.S. resolve was in doubt showed the world that we would pay whatever price was necessary to ensure the freedom of our citizens.”

The men and women of the 56th Security Forces Squadron vow to never forget the sacrifices of those who perished in the Mayaguez operation by honoring their actions each year with a formal retreat.

“Just as this nation observes the sacrifices that every man and woman in uniform have made over the course of history by having a Memorial Day observance, we in the unit feel that this is one of those significant events in our history where we can remember those who served and made the ultimate sacrifice for our country,” said Master Sgt. Dene Bimber, 56th SFS training NCO. “We feel honored to dedicate a memorial retreat ceremony to those lost.” *(Courtesy of the 56th Security Forces Squadron)*

Superfund —

Continued from Page 1



Master Sgt. Michael Burns
The “Spirit of Arizona” trophy was presented to Luke by Arizona Governor Jane Hull recognizing Luke’s efforts to improve environmental quality on the base.

“This is a great accomplishment for the flight, the base and the Air Force,” said Jeff Rothrock, 56th Civil Engineering Squadron Environmental Flight chief. “We’ve been working the project for twelve years and it’s nice to see it come to completion and become a done deal.”

Since cleanup activities began in

1990, the Air Force, with EPA oversight, has treated more than 625 cubic yards of contaminated soil, removed 66,584 gallons of jet fuel from soil near bulk fuels storage areas, and monitored groundwater for possible contamination.

“This ensures everyone on base and in the surrounding community knows they live in a hazard-free environment,” Mr. Rothrock said. It’s important to build up trust and in return, know we’re doing the right thing.”

The four pillars of the environmental flight include pollution prevention, compliance, natural cultural resources and restoration.

“The clean up completes an aspect of the restoration pillar,” Mr. Rothrock said. “It’s the tip of the pyramid for the clean-up process in the Air Force. It’s a major milestone.”

The Air Force completed all necessary remedial actions under the Superfund program in 2001 and Luke will be reviewed every five years to ensure cleanup actions are still protective.

The status of Air Force sites can be viewed at www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/mn.htm.

Job fair provides chance to network

By Airman 1st Class
Susan McQueary
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

This year’s Luke job fair is Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Desert Star Enlisted Club.

The fair is open to all Luke personnel, their families, other military members with a valid military identification card, and those who have separated within the last year.

“Approximately 100 employers will be at Luke ready to hire employees at the fair,” said James Knuckles, 56th Mission Support Squadron transition assistance manager. “This is an excellent opportunity for you to market yourself if you are in the job search process. Be prepared and come dressed as if you were going to be interviewed, because you may be.”

Interested personnel should bring at

least 20 copies of their resume, Mr. Knuckles advised.

“The job fair is set up like an open house trade show, with recruiters recruiting from a booth space,” Mr. Knuckles said. “You may walk through and pick up employment applications and talk to anyone you like.”

The job fair gives seekers and employers the opportunity to network.

“Employers have a large pool of candidates on which to draw, while the job seekers have the opportunity to shop dozens — sometimes hundreds — of employers all in one place,” Mr. Knuckles said. “This is an excellent opportunity to land a job because employers are there to line up candidates for interviews. Some even interview and hire on the spot.”

For more information about the job fair, call the Family Support Center at (623) 856-6781.

Thunderbolts to be honored at professional association rodeo

By Airman 1st Class Kara Philp

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Thunderbolts are invited to participate in Luke Day at a Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association rodeo in Buckeye May 11 at 1 p.m.

The 1 p.m. ceremony will be dedicated to Luke Air Force Base. Lt. Col. Keith Yaktus, 56th Support Group deputy commander, will be present to open the show May 11 and Chief Master Sgt. Sandra Harris, 56th Operations Group maintenance manager, will sing the National Anthem.

“Luke Day is a chance for Thunderbolts to come together for a good time as well as be recognized in the community,” said Ken Agenbroad, 56th Services Squadron marketing director. “The PRCA folks have put a lot of work into making this an event to remember.”

Discount tickets are available at the Information, Tickets and Tours office. Ticket price is \$8 for adults and \$3 for children under 12 years of age. Discount tickets are available for the May 10 rodeo performance as well.

“It’s going to be great,” said Sandra Honeycutt, Arizona West PRCA rodeo committee co-chairman. “It’s totally a family show. If someone is looking for a chance to experience our Western American Heritage, this is it.”

The May 10 rodeo performance will begin at 7 p.m. The May 11 events kick off at 8 a.m. with a cowboy golf tournament followed by rodeo performances at 1 and 7 p.m. and a rodeo dance at 8 p.m. The rodeo dance will feature special guests Ricky and the Rednecks.

Children under five years of age and 50 pounds are invited to participate in Mutton Bustin’, which is a chance for children to ride a sheep, an hour prior to each performance.

Both days’ events will be located at the rodeo grounds on Miller Road in Buckeye.

“Luke members are a part of the west valley,” Ms. Honeycutt said. “We’re looking forward to having Luke out there to join us.”

For more information or tickets, call Mr. Agenbroad at (623) 856-3245 or Ms. Honeycutt at (623) 882-2201.

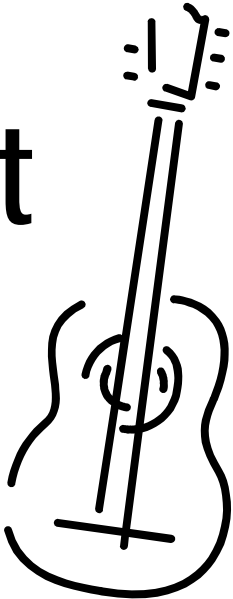
Come and see

A Salute to the Armed Forces concert

featuring guitarist Esteban

Saturday at 6 p.m.
at Fowler Park

Admission is free



AETC awards

Continued from Page 1

professional golfers association management program. He also set up training sessions with the accounting office to foster teamwork and improve flow of financial data.

“Steve leads a great staff that provides the premier golf program in the command, and most likely the entire Air Force,” Colonel Worley said. “His positive attitude inspires everyone to continue to do their best.”

Sergeant Keen was named AETC’s outstanding services superintendent of the quarter and the 56th Services Squadron senior NCO of the Year. He organized the first-ever nighttime wing picnic for Thunderbolts who work night shifts.

Additionally, Sergeant Keen developed a spreadsheet for more than 70 enlisted members to show correct data with a history of work experiences to further Airmen’s career knowledge.

“I’ve known Sergeant Keen for quite a few years and he is awesome,” Colonel Worley said. “His attention to detail and ability to motivate makes him invaluable to a ‘sizzlin’ hot’ customer service squadron.”

Sergeant Hurley was the wing’s NCO of the Year for 2001. His budgeting skills secured more than \$140,000 in fitness equipment, uniforms and supplies for the fitness and aerobic centers.

Sergeant Hurley was responsible for organizing the AETC’s Muscle Mania event. He also organized the National Tae Kwon Do Championship Trials where two members were selected for the 2004 Olympics.

“Sergeant Hurley’s utterly fantastic attitude and professional approach to leading his folks at the fitness center makes him not only the best services NCO in AETC but also the best NCO in the wing for 2001,” Colonel Worley said.

Mr. Septus Wallace performed maintenance and repairs on a steam jacketed kettle, a rotary toaster, and a soft serve yogurt machine using parts from old equipment and saving the Air Force money in service calls.

He also highlighted discrepancies in 14 incorrect recipes, forwarded the corrections, and corrections are now used Air Force-wide. Mr. Septus Wallace also assisted the storeroom manger with shortages in food supply and brought missed food items down from 31- to 5-percent.

“Mr. Wallace is an awesome chef, but more importantly an outstanding trainer of our young Airmen learning how to cook,” Colonel Worley said. “His fantastic outlook on life is key to his success and the great food at the dining facility.”

Sergeant Mooney tracked lodging arrangements and accommodations for incoming units, assigned and maintained accurate counts of personnel within limited facility space. She also completed inventories of more than 100 rooms on her weekend training tour, which saved 30 man-hours for the management staff and completed the task 10 days ahead of schedule.

The lodging superintendent also handpicked Sergeant Mooney to build the Lodging Touch System Implementation schedule.

“Sergeant Mooney is an outstanding IMA,” said Lt. Col. Patricia Carpenter, 56th Services Squadron commander. “She provided unparalleled continuity to the service’s front desk operations.”

Free concert honors U.S. Armed Forces

By Airman 1st Class
Susan McQueary
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The Luke community is invited to attend a free concert Saturday beginning at 5 p.m. at Fowler Park.

The concert is entitled “A Salute to the Armed Forces” and will feature music, dancing and classical guitarist, Esteban.

The evening will open with the National Anthem sung by Airman Brenda Cornell, 56th Mission Support Squadron personnel specialist.

“This was an idea that began at the enlisted club,” said Chuck German, 56th Services Squadron Desert Star Enlisted Club manager. “It is a great idea to have something new and different for the Luke community.”

Guitarist Esteban will perform from 7 to 7:30 p.m. followed by a talent show featuring 10 performers.

“Military members, their families and civilians will sing and perform

on stage,” said Ernest Howard, 56th Services Squadron community center director.

In addition, the concert will feature Vic Conyers, 56th SVS fitness center manager, as the master of ceremonies, and a variety of food and beverages available for purchase.

Prizes will also be given away throughout the concert.

“This is the first time we’ve tried this,” Mr. German said. “It will be fun.”

At 8:30 p.m., the performers will get together to sing “God Bless the U.S.A.” and Esteban will return to the stage to wrap up the concert.

“This is a response to the patrons,” Mr. Howard said. “We appreciate all the volunteers who have offered their support. If this works out and we have a good response, we will do it again.”

For more information, call the community center at (623) 856-7152 or the Desert Star Enlisted Club at (623) 856-7137.

“This was an idea that began at the enlisted club. It is a great idea to have something new and different for the Luke community.”

Chuck German
56th Services Squadron
Desert Star Enlisted Club manager

World War II veteran receives Bronze Star

By Airman 1st Class Susan McQueary
56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

After 58 years, a pilot in the Army Air Corps during World War II received the Bronze Star Medal Wednesday in the 56th Fighter Wing conference room.

Rusty Bales, a second lieutenant during World War II, was presented the medal by Col. Dennis Rea, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander.

“There is no statute of limitations for bravery and heroism,” Colonel Rea said. “It took him 58 years to receive this medal, and I am honored to recognize his courage and leadership.”

Many family members and friends of Mr. Bales joined him during this occasion, including his grandson, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Andrew Weisel, who pinned the medal on Mr. Bales’ jacket as tears filled his eyes. Lance Cpl. Weisel is currently serving as a ceremonial honor guardsman in Washington, D.C. and flew to Arizona for this ceremony.

The Bronze Star Medal is awarded to any person serving in any branch of military service who, while serving in the armed forces on or after Dec. 7, 1941, has distinguished himself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight in connection with military operations against an armed enemy. The award recognizes acts of heroism performed in ground combat and single acts of merit and meritorious

service.

Rather than being drafted into the Army Air Corps, Mr. Bales became a commissioned officer in 1942. As a small child, Mr. Bales knew he wanted to be a pilot.

“One night, two pilots had landed in a field behind our house in California and my father invited them to eat dinner and spend the night,” Mr. Bales recalled. “You see, pilots didn’t fly at night during those days. The pilots were the sharpest looking guys to me, an 8-year-old.”

Mr. Bales, then 19 years old, attended Advanced Flying School at Williams Air Base in Mesa, Ariz. Feb. 6, 1943, and was declared the youngest in the Army Air Corps at the time.

Following his training at Williams AB, Mr. Bales was sent to Sookerating, India. At 4:30 a.m. Oct. 13, 1943, Mr. Bales was awakened for a C-46 flight scheduled to take off at 6:45 a.m.

“I had arranged for an earlier wake-up time to get out to the plane to supervise the loading,” Mr. Bales recalled.

The crew of three men, the co-pilot, the crew chief, and the radio operator had arrived by the time Mr. Bales had finished his breakfast.

“I was in command of an unfamiliar airplane and unfamiliar crew,” Mr. Bales said. “The crews were all randomly picked. We had normally flown without a crew

See **Bronze Star**, Page 11



Staff Sgt. Christopher Mathews
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Andrew Weisel pins the Bronze Star Medal on his grandfather, Rusty Bales, second lieutenant during World War II, while Col. Dennis Rea, 56th Fighter Wing vice commander, looks on.

Bronze Star —

Continued from Page 10

chief, but it was learned that the planes were usually better maintained when one of its mechanics had to fly in it.”

The weather was bad that day and about 8:15 a.m., Mr. Bales heard a rattling noise.

“I believed I had a lot of prop ice and hit the deicer button,” Mr. Bales said. “The crew chief told me the right wing was on fire. Then a small white fighter plane with a great big red emblem came up into view and I realized the propeller ice was really machine gun slugs hitting my airplane.”

The crew parachuted out of the plane as the Japanese fighter plane dove toward them.

“We were between the plane and the hillside so the pilot couldn’t get to us,” he said. “He pulled up to avoid collision. I saw my plane hit the mountain and blow up.”

Mr. Bales landed in a treetop and swung like a pendulum.

“There I was, without a scratch or bruise,” he said. “I unbuckled the parachute and took off the jungle pack. Opening the pack, I found it had been sabo-

taged. The food packs were gone and there were no matches.”

The crew made it safely, but the location of the co-pilot was unknown. Mr. Bales told the crew chief and radio operator to stay behind and he would find out if he could see out of the jungle. After walking until 6 or 7 p.m., the crew decided to stop for the night.

“I was a second lieutenant and the other two were privates, and had been in the service for a shorter time than I had,” he said. “In any event, our problem was clearly survival.”

On the third day, the crew met a group of natives from Burma and communicated through the use of sign language. The natives fed the crew rice and pieces of chicken and offered them a place to sleep.

The natives brought the co-pilot to the crew on the fourth day. He was paralyzed from the waist down and partially in his arms and shoulders.

The fifth day, the natives led the crew to another village where they were also

fed and given a place to sleep.

“I can only guess at the distance we traveled, but it couldn’t have been more than six to ten miles,” Mr. Bales said.

By the sixth day, the co-pilot was gaining some feeling in his legs. The natives took the crew to yet another village where they were again fed and given a place to sleep for the night.

From the seventh through fourteenth days, the crew had the same experiences as the natives took them to different villages.

On the fifteenth day, the crew arrived at a military camp near Konglu, Burma where two English majors and 20 Gurkha soldiers were.

“The officers advised they had gotten the message by native runner that the four of us were arriving,” Mr. Bales said. “They had been ordered to abandon the area. They told me the Japanese were getting into the area. They had requested an air drop of further supplies so they could supply us.”

On Oct. 29, 1943, the sixteenth day

after Mr. Bales and his crew members were reported missing in action, the crew said goodbye to the natives.

“I remember my feelings of gratitude because of their kindness to our crew,” Mr. Bales recalled. “We were told we had been very fortunate to have the plane go down as far north as we had. The natives in the lower area near Mytkiana would most likely have had no choice but to turn us over to the Japanese.”

Nov. 3, 1943 — the last day of Mr. Bales’ journey. As he came to a river, he could see an American Jeep sitting on the bank.

An American captain assured Mr. Bales the crew chief and co-pilot had been airlifted to India two days prior.

“He told me they had no idea as to who we were, as on Oct. 13, there had been two or three planes that had not arrived at their destination. The radio operator had not gotten out our may day message.”

“I had always felt I would survive even during that long walk,” Mr. Bales recalled. “I was almost shot down a second time while flying in C-47s in China. I had many other things happen to me that could have done me in, but I survived. Luck and good training all had a hand in my being able to tell this story years later.”

“There is no statute of limitations for bravery and heroism.”

Col. Dennis Rea
56th Fighter Wing vice commander



Jake Galvin, 56th Services Squadron Outdoor Recreation Center trip tour guide, inspects a sports bag list to make certain all the equipment is ready for checkout.

Outdoor Recreation

The answer to summer fun

**Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Corey Drury**

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

As the weather and water temperatures warm up, the call of nature beckons many people to the great outdoors. Standing by to assist those tempted by the call of the wild is the 56th Services Squadron Outdoor Recreation Center.

Whether it's hiking the longest trails, fishing the biggest lakes or camping on the highest mountains, outdoor recreation is available to help people find the right place and supply them with the equipment to get there.

"One of our jobs is to help people get to where they are going. We like helping people plan their trips and to organize the right equipment for the outing they are taking," said Bill Briggs, 56th SVS outdoor recreation adventure and tour manager.

The center offers equipment to cover just about every outdoor activity.

"We offer a variety of products to rent like ski boats, fishing boats, pontoon boats, camper sleepers and all the equipment necessary to support an entire camping trip," Mr. Briggs said. "If you like fishing, we offer free fishing poles and even information on places to fish."

Outdoor recreation also has sporting equipment available for personal or squadron functions.

"If your squadron likes to play sports and you want to check out equipment, we have a new sports bag filled with softball gear, a basketball, volleyball and other equipment, to include a cooler, you can check out for free," said Jake Galvan, 56th SVS Outdoor Recreation trip tour guide. "We even have tables, chairs and large super cookers to rent for a big get-together you may be planning."

People, who want to travel to a recreation site without the hassle, can talk to the trip coordinator at outdoor recreation.

"We can help find a tour that best serves your needs," Mr. Briggs said. "We have whitewater rafting, Grand Canyon hikes and trail horseback riding, tours to Laughlin, NV., and even trips to Hollywood, Calif. At outdoor recreation, we can tailor a trip that might be more to your liking."

The outdoor recreation staff strives to meet customers' needs.

"We have a lot to offer the community and have a number of resources to help people obtain the most out of their events or recreational needs," Mr. Briggs said.

For more information call (623) 856-6267 or (623) 856-9334, or visit the Web site at www.lukerecreation.com.



Tech. Sgt. David Maytes, 56th Transportation Squadron multipurpose vehicles NCO in charge, checks out sporting equipment for a squadron function.



Maj. Allen Rabayda, 56th Operations Support Squadron Weather Flight commander, pays Ron Oudean, 56th Services Squadron Outdoor Recreation center rental manager, for a planned camping trip with his family.



Jake Galvin, 56th Services Squadron outdoor recreation trip tour guide, gives Tech. Sgt. Rebecca Roady, 56th Transportation Squadron maintenance control augmentee, a receipt for payment of a bicycle she checked out.

Full

Retirement could mean \$30,000 decision

By Tech. Sgt. Jason Tudor

Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO — Tech. Sgt. Victor Alcala is staring retirement in the face and it is waving \$30,000 at him.

Segeant Alcala, a television and radio equipment maintainer stationed in San Antonio, along with hundreds of other Airmen, has been asked to make a choice. A choice in which both options can be winners. Segeant Alcala just needs to decide.

“This is a very important life decision for my future financial stability,” he said. “I want to feel 100-percent sure about my choice and know that it will benefit me the most.”

The choices affect Airmen who joined the service after Aug. 1, 1986. Each option — presented when an airman reaches the 14-year, six-month point of a career — holds different consequences. Option No. 1 holds a retirement check worth 50 percent or greater after 20 years of service. Option No. 2 is a \$30,000 lump-sum bonus plus a similar retirement plan after 20 years’ time, but with conditions.

Whichever option is chosen, the decision can be altered, with a waiver, until an Airman’s 15-year anniversary passes. At that point, the Defense Department locks the Airman into his choice.

The first option is called High-3. According to a Defense Department information package, it includes:

- ♦ Collecting the average monthly basic pay over the highest-paid 36 months of a career;
- ♦ A 2.5-percent multiplier per year of service; and
- ♦ An annual cost-of-living adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index

The second option, called Career Status Bonus/Redux, includes:

- ♦ A \$30,000 lump-sum payment at the 15th year of service anniversary;
- ♦ Collecting the average monthly basic pay over

the highest-paid 36 months of a career;

- ♦ A modified multiplier for each year of service
- ♦ A modified cost-of-living adjustment

Defense Department officials also said Airmen electing the bonus still receive a 2.5-percent multiplier for each year of service; however, 1 percentage point is subtracted for each year less than 30 served.

Redux also alters annual Consumer Price Index-based cost-of-living adjustments by 1 percent annually, according to Defense Department officials. If the adjustment is 3 percent for High-3 retirees, it is 2 percent for the Redux crowd. The 1 percent adjustment continues past age 62.

Airmen who take the bonus and fail to finish a 20-year career are required to pay a portion back. That portion is equal to the percentage of service he or she failed to complete compared to what he or she agreed to serve. There are a few exceptions, including disability, death and others.

Further, the bonus is taxed by federal and state governments. That fee is collected based on tax bracket. The bonus may be taken tax free if chosen while serving in a combat zone, and numerous conditions apply. In addition, some tax burden may be avoided by placing some of the bonus money into the Thrift Savings Plan, said DOD officials.

Coverage on the Survivor Benefit Plan also changes by taking Redux. With fewer than 30 years of service, the computation of premiums and benefits will not reflect the multiplier reduction for retirement. The result is 5 to 10 percent higher premiums than those who chose High-3.

There are plenty of voices telling Sereant Alcala and others what to do, including spouses, relatives and friends.

“There are enough investment calculators and information on the Internet to come up with a good understanding of your choice,” Sergeant. Alcala said. “In researching my choice I have cleared some misconceptions I had about the plan.”

Paula Gradwell, a financial counselor at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, understands the decision-time stress. She has counseled Airmen through bankruptcies, rebuilt budgets and faced spending woes for more than 10 years. The former high school economics teacher said planning now, not later, and making an informed decision before the deadline hits makes sense.

“You have to know what your long-term financial goals are and do a lot of homework,” Ms. Gradwell said. “And if you have a spouse, be sure (he or she is) an equal part of this decision.”

Ms. Gradwell said the lump sum is inviting; however, she cautioned those seeking a quick fix to debts or an instant down payment for the purchase of a home to measure their spending closely.

“The question is simple: will you have the self-discipline to save the money

each month that no longer needs to go toward debt and use it only for your financial future?” she asked. “Most of us cannot afford to then run up more credit card debt.”

The Defense Department offers a number of Web-based resources via DefenseLink, including an online retirement calculator to help with the decision. There are also a number of articles available.

Further, upon notification of decision-making time, commanders’ support staffs offer a 12-page Defense Department pamphlet explaining the choices and the consequences, and illustrating how retirement pay is affected over time.

“This is a very important life decision for my future financial stability.”

Tech. Sgt. Victor Alcala
Radio equipment maintainer

Around Base

Volunteer opportunity

Luke Elementary School is looking for volunteers to work at the spring carnival May 18 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call Angie Hohman at (623)535-4121 or e-mail tupwareldy@aol.com.

Showtime at the Apollo

The community center presents "Showtime at the Apollo" Thursday at 7 p.m. The performance includes singing, dancing and comedy. Admission is free.



Mother's Day buffets

The Desert Star Enlisted Club is hosting a Mother's Day buffet May 12 from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$12.75 for adults, \$5 for children 6 to 12, and free for children under 5. Reservations are required. For more information call (623) 935-2610.

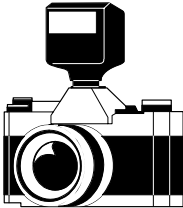


The Officers' Club is hosting a Mother's Day buffet May 12 from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$12.95 for adults, \$5.95 for children 6 to 12 and free for children under 5 and moms (one mom

per person). Reservations are required. For more information, call (623) 856-6446.

Photo contest

Youth, 6 to 18, wanting to enter the Boy's and Girl's Club National Photography Contest can check out cameras from the youth center. Contest submissions can be black and white, color or digital photos. An exhibition of submitted photos will be May 21 through 23. For more information, call (623) 856-6225.



Memorial Day brunch

The Ray V. Hensman Dining Facility is serving a Memorial Day brunch May 27 from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3:30 to 6 p.m.

Base picnic

The 56th Fighter Wing picnic is May 24 at 11 a.m at the fitness center ballfields. The picnic is free to all military and Defense Department employees and includes barbecue chicken and pork, potato salad, baked beans and soda.

Birth announcements

The Thunderbolt is running birth announcements. Those wishing to announce a birth should visit Kate Norris at the Thunderbolt office, Bldg. 453, (623) 856-5998.



Kids in the Kitchen

Kids in the Kitchen is May 29 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the youth center. Youths, 6 to 12, will make peanut butter cup candies. The cost is \$3 per person. Register by May 24. For more information, call (623)856-6225.



Concert

The community center is hosting a free concert in the park entitled "A Salute to the Armed Forces" Saturday at 6 p.m. at Fowler Park. A variety of performers will be in attendance, including classical guitarist, Esteban.



Theater

The Luke Experience is looking for people who enjoy acting and working backstage. Actors can audition Mondays at 6 p.m. at the base theater. For more information, call (623) 856-7152.

Folk festival

The Pioneer Folk Festival at Pioneer Living History Museum is offering free admission Saturday and Sunday for military ID card holders. The museum is located off I-17 north at the Carefree Highway exit, turn left. For more information, call (623) 465-1052 or visit www.pioneer-arizona.com.

Lake Powell discounts

To honor the nation's heroes, Lake Powell resorts and marinas are offering 25-percent discounts to military members on lodging, rentals and

tours through May 23. When making reservations, refer to discount code Hero-02. For more information, call 1-888-486-4665 or visit www.lakepowell.com.

Red Cross opportunity

Volunteers are needed for the Red Cross National Convention hosted by the Grand Canyon Chapter of the American Red Cross at Phoenix Civic Plaza May 31 through June 2 from noon until 5 p.m. Volunteers will receive lunch, a t-shirt and free Diamondbacks tickets. For more information, call (623) 856-7823.

Bingo

The youth center is hosting pre-teen bingo May 10 at 6:30 p.m. at Bldg. 1143. The cost is \$3 per person.

Retiree news

The retiree activities office quarterly newsletter is available online at www.luke.af.mil/retiree.

Birthday meal

The Ray V. Hensman Dining Facility invites all Airmen with birthdays in April and May to attend a Birthday meal on May 30 at 5 p.m. The meal includes steak and lobster or steak and shrimp served by the Airmen's commanders and first sergeants. Sign up at the dining facility. For more information, call (623) 856-6238.



—————See Around Base, Page 16

Around Base

Continued from Page 15

Thrift shop

The thrift shop is located in Bldg. 610. Store hours are Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call (623) 935-5782.

Children's story time

The library sponsors a children's story time Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Thursday's stories are about Mother's Day; May 16 about frogs; May 23 are Lillian Hoban Stories; and stories May 30 are about clowns and the circus.



Toastmasters

Toastmaster meetings are Tuesdays at 6:30 a.m. at the Goodyear fire station, 3075 North Litchfield Rd. For more information, call (623) 877-2453.

Yellowstone RV rentals

The 366th Services Squadron at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, is offering RV rentals at Yellowstone National Park. The cost for active-duty and retired military, civilian Defense Department personnel and their families is \$55 per night. For more information, call DSN 728-6333 or commercial (208) 828-6333.



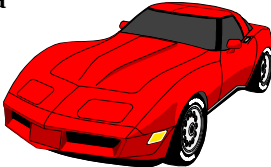
Troops to Teachers

A meeting for people interested Troops to Teachers program is July 30 at 3 p.m. in the Public Affairs auditorium, located on the first floor of Bldg. 1150. Updated information on the programs and teacher certification requirements will be provided. For more information, call (623) 856-7725.



Oil change

The auto skills shop offers a complete oil change for \$19.95 for most vehicles, which includes up to 5 quarts of oil. For an appointment, call (623) 856-6107.



Job ready

"Job Ready," a program that teaches teens effective job hunting techniques, meets Thursday, May 11 and 30 from 6 to 7 p.m. Register the Monday prior to class date. For more information, call (623) 856-6225.

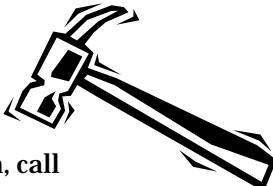
Craft opportunity

The Red Cross is seeking volunteers who can knit, crochet or sew comfort items from home for various groups. Supplies and instructions can be provided. Donations of materials, thread, buttons and machine-washable yarn are also needed. For more information, call (623) 977-2736.



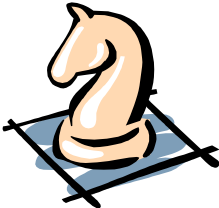
Wood skills help

The wood skills staff offers one-on-one instruction during normal operating hours. For more information, call (623) 856-6566.



Board game night

The youth center's board game nights for youth, 6 to 12, are Mondays at 6 p.m. and limited to 12 participants. For more information, call (623) 856-6225.



Explorers meeting

The Career Explorers meet Tuesdays at 6 p.m. Career Explorers offers an introduction to a wide variety of potential career opportunities. Register by 8 p.m. the day before the meeting. For more information, call (623) 856-6225.

Cultural meals

The Ray V. Hensman Dining Facility features cultural meals Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday is Italian; Mexican May 15; Southern May 22; and German May 29. Falcon Inn cultural meals are served Tuesdays.



Arts and crafts

Arts and crafts nights for youth, 6 to 12, are Wednesdays from 6 to 7 p.m. at the youth center. The cost is \$3.

Aquatics programs

A Red Cross lifeguard class that leads to certification in American Red Cross CPR and qualification (after a certification test) as a professional rescuer, first aid and lifeguard meets at the Litchfield Park Recreation Center. The second session starts Monday through May 12 and registration is Wednesday. Cost is \$125 per person and includes instruction book, masks and certification cards. Both written and skills tests are required to receive certification. There is a swimming prerequisite. A minimum of four participants is required for class to be held. Participants must be at least 15 years old. Registrations are taken at outdoor recreation during normal hours. For more information, call at (623)856-9334.

Isn't she lovely ...



Tech. Sgt. Kevin Dooms

Samantha Barnett, daughter of Brandi Biggers and Senior Airman Brian Biggers, 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron explosives technician, models a dress during the youth center's second annual spring fashion show April 26. The event, sponsored by the base exchange, was open to the Luke community.

Outdoor Recreation

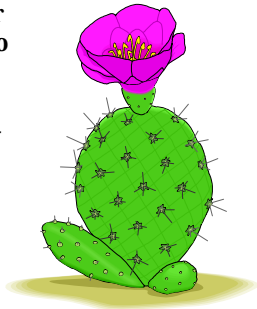
The 56th Services Squadron Outdoor Recreation Center is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information on trips or rental equipment, call (623) 856-6267 or visit the web site at www.lukerecreation.com.

Laughlin tour

Laughlin, Nev., gaming tours are May 12 and June 9. The \$5 per person cost includes transportation, buffet lunch and coupon book.

Arizona hike

Hiking trips for advanced hikers to several Arizona locations are planned for Saturday and Sunday and June 1 and 2. The cost is \$75 and includes education in survival techniques, food, camping equipment and transportation.



Mexico shopping

Shopping trips to Algodones, Mexico, are May 11 and June 8. The \$20 per person cost includes transportation.



Grand Canyon campout

A campout at the Grand Canyon is May 25 through 27. The cost is \$95 and includes food and transportation.

Paintball

A paintball weekend is July 27 through 28. The cost is to be announced and includes food, equipment and transportation.

Las Vegas trip

A trip to Las Vegas is May 25 through 27. The cost is \$130 per person and includes hotel accommodations and transportation.



Fishing

Family camping, fishing, canoeing and hiking trips are May 18 and 19 and June 15 and 16. The cost is \$50 and includes food, equipment and transportation.

Equipment rental

New items to rent include 26-inch single-speed bicycles and helmets, electric yard blower/vacuum, and hand-held GPS. Old favorites include boats and camper trailers, tents and sleeping bags, ice chests and free fishing poles.

Pavilion reservations

Reservations for the pavilions at Fowler and Silver Wing Parks are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. For reservations, call (623)856-6267.

Movies

Movies begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Cost is \$3 per adult and \$1.50 for children 11 and under. For more information or for a movie schedule, e-mail lukeafbtheater@yahoo.com



Friday and Saturday

“Blade 2” (R)
Starring Wesley Snipes, Kris Kristofferson, Norman Reedus, and Leonor Varela.
Exploding from the pages of Marvel Comics comes the follow-up to the blockbuster, Blade. Blade is half

man, half vampire and consumed by a desire to avenge the curse of his birth and save the human race from a blood-drenched Armageddon. In this newest adventure, Blade must align himself with a high-powered team of vampires to take on a greater evil than either has ever faced — a new kind of super-vampire that is itself on a vicious hunt to eradicate both races. *(125 minutes)*



Sunday at 6 p.m.

“Showtime” (PG-13)
Starring Robert DeNiro, Eddie Murphy, Rene Russo, Frankie Faison and William Shatner.
When a no-nonsense LAPD detective is forced to star on a reality-based TV show with a frustrated

actor-turned-LAPD patrolman, they find their lives turned upside down by a powerhouse producer and her very intrusive camera crew. *(95 minutes)*



May 10

“Death To Smoochy” (R)
Starring Robin Williams, Edward Norton, Catherine Keener, and Danny DeVito.
“Death to Smoochy” tells the comic tale of Rainbow Randolph, the costumed star of a popular children’s television show who is fired over a bribery scandal and replaced by Smoochy, a puffy, Barney-esque fuscia rhinoceros. When Randolph discovers Smoochy is having an affair with his ex-lover, Nora, a top programming executive at the network, he plots his revenge. *(109 minutes)*

FULL



The 56th Fighter Wing Picnic

[illegible]

Worship schedule

The following services and classes are at the Luke Community Chapel unless stated otherwise:

Protestant

- ♦ Sunday traditional service is at 11 a.m. at the Chapel on the Mall.
 - ♦ Sunday school program is at 9:30 a.m.
 - ♦ Sunday gospel service is at 8:30 a.m. at the Chapel on the Mall
 - ♦ Sunday contemporary service is at 11 a.m.;
- children's church is also available
- ♦ "Singles at the Way" is Saturdays at 6 p.m.
 - ♦ "Youth at the Way" is Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

Catholic

- ♦ Saturday Mass is at 5 p.m.
- ♦ Sunday Mass is at 9:30 a.m. and 12:45 p.m.
- ♦ Weekday Mass is at noon



Jewish

- ♦ Shabbat service is at 6 p.m. every fourth Friday

Muslim

- ♦ Muslim worship is today at 1 p.m.

Religious education

- ◆ Confirmation classes are Sunday from 5:30 p.m.
- ◆ CCD classes are at 11 a.m. in Bldg. 1150 in the third floor atrium
 - ◆ Baptism seminars for parents of children under 7 years old are at 7 p.m. every first and second Monday of every month at “The Way.”

Youth events

- ♦ The junior Catholic youth group meets Tuesdays from 5 to 7 p.m.
- ♦ The Catholic youth group meets Wednesdays from 5:30 to 9 p.m.

**For more information on these programs, call
(623) 856-6211.**

New initiatives announced for MilPDS

Air Force fixes personnel payroll systems problems

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) — The nearly year-old Military Personnel Data System, or MilPDS, is still giving some Airmen and commanders fits, and the senior person responsible for the system has announced several new initiatives to fix the remaining problems.

At the end of last year, officials believed there were no “systemic” problems in MilPDS and its interface with the pay system. That changed in February and March when new problems were identified.

“The fact that it has caused so much disruption to our hard-working, patriotic Airmen throughout the Air Force is what concerns me the most,” said Maj. Gen. Mike McMahan, commander of the Air Force Personnel Center. “I’ve been out there talking to Airmen and I hear their concerns.”

Some of those comments and customer feedback through AFPC’s contact center have helped to identify many of the ongoing problems, he said.

Among the efforts is a renewed emphasis on customer service for people calling the contact center at DSN 665-5000 or toll free (866) 558-1404.

General McMahan said every effort is being made to eliminate pay problems caused by the personnel data system.

“The best thing we can do is to fix these problems so that every airman can get back to his or her job and not have to spend extra time worrying about whether such things as their pay will be right,” he said.

The general pointed to senior Air Force leaders’ concern about the problems as well. In March, Air Force finance, personnel and manpower leaders formed a personnel/pay council, lending ongoing high-level commitment to efforts to solve difficult pay problems.

MilPDS, then called Military Modernization, or MilMod, was a necessary transition to get the Air Force’s personnel data system in line with current technologies and current needs.

“When we finally get it working as designed, it will improve service and accuracy,” the general said. “But until we get hard fixes to all the problems, it is more work and more disruptive than the old system, and that’s why we’re working very hard to fix it.”

Among initiatives to get final control over MilPDS is a push for additional training for the workers at military personnel flights about how best to use the system to serve customers.

The plan is to give MPFs and finance offices better access to the latest information and to offer them

more training, conducted by experts at the center, said Dave Ashton, who is in charge of requirements for the data system.

“A desire to offer the good training resources is spurring development of online help for personnel specialists,” said Mr. Ashton. “The electronic document will contain not only the technical orders for the data system but also ‘clickable’ links to current temporary ‘workarounds.’”

“We’ve identified this as a need for the field since we’re fixing, updating and developing workarounds constantly, and there’s almost no way for folks at the MPFs to all keep current. This will be up-to-the-minute current,” he said.

The document will be similar to the linked “help” function in many standard commercial computer programs, he said.

Another effort at training the MPFs and finance offices will be the use of Webcasts for base personnel flights. A live question-and-answer format running simultaneously with live online demonstrations of procedures will allow more than 20 people at more than 20 locations worldwide to be trained on the latest processes at the same time.

“We have had challenges with several different important issues begging for attention all at once, but pay and customer service have been, and will continue to be, very high priorities for us,” said General McMahan.



Tech. Sgt. Kevin Dooms
Julio Valencia, 56th Medical Operations Squadron, slides into third base Sunday night during the Luke Falcons vs. Peoria Big League Dugout varsity baseball game. The Falcons defeated Big League Dugout, 6 to 4.

Varsity baseball team beats Peoria Big League Dugout

By **Airman 1st Class Susan McQueary**

56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The Luke Falcons varsity baseball team defeated the Peoria Big League Dugout team 6 to 4 Sunday at the Peoria Sports Complex.

The fifth inning was the high point for the Falcons as Julio Valencia, Jeff Hayes, Darius Parker and Nick Lyons each scored runs.

The score was tied at the end of the first inning, 1-1.

The defense of each team kept the score tied at 1-1 throughout the second and third innings as neither team scored runs.

Jorel Justus brought the Falcons into the lead in the top of the fourth inning, 2-1.

In the top of the fifth inning, the Falcons overpowered the Big League Dugout's defense as four runs were scored. The Big League Dugout tried to come back in the bottom of the fifth scoring two runs, but the Falcons remained in the lead, 6-3.

In the bottom of the sixth, the Big League Dugout snuck one more run past the Falcons, but it wasn't enough to put them in the lead.

The Falcons seemed ready for the game to end at the bottom of the seventh, as three batters were retired one after another and the game ended with another Falcon victory, 6-4.

The Falcons' next game is Sunday at 11 a.m. against the Phoenix Five-O's at Peoria Sports Complex on field P2.

Slam dunk ...



Master Sgt. Michael Burns
Marcus Joseph, 56th Supply Squadron, dunks the ball during the fitness center's three point and dunk competition. Sascha Stafford, 56th Operations Squadron took first place. The competition kicked off the center's May Fitness Month events.

Sports Shorts

Bowling

Luke Lanes is running a Mother's Day extreme bowling special May 12 from noon to 4 p.m. Children bowl for \$2.10 a game. Moms bowl for free.

Jidokwan instruction

The community center offers instruction in Jidokwan for adults from 10 to 11 a.m. Mondays and Thursdays, and for families from 6 to 7 p.m. Wednesdays. For more information, call (623) 856-7152.

Hapkido instruction

The community center offers instruction in combat Hapkido for adults from 10 to 11 a.m. Wednesdays and for families from 7 to 8 p.m. Fridays. For more information, call (623) 856-7152.

Summer basketball

Parents can register their children, 6 to 12 years old, for summer basketball leagues through May 18. A copy of the child's birth certificate is needed to verify age. For more information, call (623) 856-6225.

Fitness month

During the month of May, the fitness center will stamp special cards for each activity participated in. For each card completed, the individual will be entered into a drawing for an all-inclusive four-night, five-day vacation package to either Jamaica or the Bahamas. The winner will be notified July 5. For more information on the point system and activities available, call the fitness center at (623) 856-6214.

Golf tournament

Falcon Dunes golf course is sponsoring a police week golf tournament May 17 at 1 p.m. Contest prizes include a Cancun vacation for two, player's choice golf vacation and golf clubs. The cost is \$40 per person. Send fee no later than May 13 to UAC, 7333 North Bong Lane, Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. 85309-1428. For more information call, Jim Adams at (623) 856-3854, Mike McGuire at (623) 856-6114 or Eric Saracino at (623) 856-3748.

Wrestling tournament

There is a wrestling tournament Saturday at noon at the base gym. The tournament is open to all military ID holders. For more information, call Rudy Bautista at (623) 535-2004.

Volleyball tournament

There is a volleyball tournament May 13 through 16 at the base gym. Participants must sign-up by today. For more information, call (623) 856-6241.

Aerobathon

The fitness center is holding an aerobathon May 17 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the fitness center. Registration begins today. For more information call, (623) 856-3247.

Pool opening

The Silver Wings Pool grand opening will be May 11 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. The grand opening features refreshments and prizes.

Bike ride and picnic

The fitness center is sponsoring a bike ride and picnic at White Tank National Park. Registration is today. For more information, call (623) 856-6241.

Lockers

The fitness center is issuing permanent lockers to active duty, civilians, family members and retired military. Sign up at the fitness center by Monday. For more information, call (623) 856-6241.

Full

Full